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S E C R E T LAGOS 001748

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/W
STATE FOR INR/AA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/09/2015

TAGS: [CASC](#) [FAIR](#) [NI](#) [ASEC](#) [PTER](#) [PREL](#)

SUBJECT: PRELIMINARY REVIEW YIELDS NO "SMOKING GUN" IN
BELLVIEW DEBRIS

REF: LAGOS 1743 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: Consul General Brian L. Browne for Reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

1. (S) Explosives forensics experts performed a preliminary examination of the Bellview plane crash debris thus far collected. Visual inspection of the plane fragment in question showed no clear sign of explosive damage, according to the experts. The suspect piece was swabbed, and the samples will be transported to the FBI laboratory for more precise analysis. Testing will take approximately two days. Should this yield positive results for explosives, additional tests will be performed, taking two to three additional days. Test results will be delivered to GON to assist with their ongoing investigation.

2. (S) Legal Attache, the on-site National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) representative, and the forensics team briefed Aviation Minister Borishade, Director of the Accident Investigation and Prevention Bureau Angus Ozoka, and three explosives experts from the State Security Service on the preliminary results. However, the team stressed that although examination of the subject fragment did not yield evidence of an explosion, it could not yet be definitively concluded that an explosion did not take place. The USG experts cautioned the Nigerian side that debris collection and analysis must continue so that we can get as complete a picture as possible, and that any additional questionable discoveries must be evaluated carefully if they appear.

3. (S) GON personnel will continue excavation at the crash site and the movement of the debris to the hangar where they will attempt to fit the pieces together. The NTSB team is suspending work for approximately two weeks until additional debris is transported to the hangar. The NTSB representative said the work of reconstructing the plane will be time-consuming and slow. This work would be facilitated by discovery of the flight data recorders, he added. So far, the data recorders have not been found at the Bellview site.
BROWNE